

**A RESOLUTION OF THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL, SUPPORTING A TEN PARTS PER
BILLION PHOSPHORUS WATER QUALITY STANDARD FOR THE
EVERGLADES; SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINES
CONTAINED IN THE EVERGLADES FOREVER ACT OF 1994; URGING
THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERGLADES POLLUTION SHOULD BE
FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CLEANUP; AND URGING THAT
CHANGES TO EVERGLADES MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION BE
UNDERTAKEN ONLY AFTER CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT
FEDERAL AGENCIES**

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is an ecosystem of statewide and national significance including mainland America's only living coral reef and the largest documented seagrass bed on earth; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is the nation's most visited national marine sanctuary and its boundaries encompass John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, Florida's most visited state park; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary borders three national parks, including Everglades National Park, one third of which is made up of Florida Bay; and

WHEREAS the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary ecosystem encompasses four national wildlife refuges; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council is made up entirely of Keys citizens representing a cross section of stakeholders including commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, diving, conservation, public officials and citizens at large; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys depends economically on a healthy marine ecosystem as the foundation of the area's two primary industries, tourism and commercial fishing; and

WHEREAS, the Keys' commercial fishery is one of the most valuable in the nation and depends heavily on good water quality; and

WHEREAS, Florida Bay and the Florida Keys are the ultimate receiving bodies of the Everglades watershed; and

WHEREAS, Florida Bay and the Keys' reef depend on clean water and have been suffering the effects of eutrophication; and

WHEREAS, the cleanup of the Everglades and Florida Bay has been the subject of intense public attention, a federal lawsuit and the largest environmental restoration plan ever attempted; and

WHEREAS, scientists and the State of Florida agree that the Everglades require a ten parts per billion phosphorus standard; and

WHEREAS, the residents of the Florida Keys and Key West, have been paying for Everglades pollution cleanup via the property tax on our extremely highly valued homes and businesses; and

WHEREAS, Members of Congress have advised the Florida Legislature that changes to the agreements by the state to improve Everglades water quality could endanger federal funding for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL:

That the Superintendent of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is requested to advise State Rep. Ken Sorensen, State Sen. Larcenia Bullard, U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros Lehtinen, U.S. Sen. Bob Graham, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, members of the Florida House Natural Resources Committee, members of the Florida Senate Natural Resources Committee, Department of Environmental Protection Secretary David Struhs and Governor Jeb Bush of the following:

Section 1: That the ten parts per billion phosphorus standard for the Everglades is hereby strongly supported.

Section 2: That implementation deadlines contained in the Everglades Forever Act of 1994 are hereby strongly supported.

Section 3: That it is hereby urged that those responsible for Everglades pollution should be financially responsible for the cleanup.

Section 4: That changes to Everglades management and implementation with such profound significance for resources of national and regional importance, ecologically and economically, be undertaken only after extensive consultation with relevant federal agencies including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Interior.

UNANIMOUSLY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 8TH DAY OF APRIL 2003

THE HONORABLE GEORGE NEUGENT, CHAIR